

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 MCT-01 ACDA-07 SSM-03 IO-13 TRSE-00 /081 W
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R 161317Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4889
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PLO, SREF, LE
SUBJECT: FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF FALL OF TAL AL-ZAATAR

1. PALESTINIANS MARKED AUGUST 12, FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF FALL OF TAL AL-ZAATAR, WITH DEMONSTRATION IN DAMOUR, Wafa EDITORIAL, AND MILITANT ADDRESS BY YASSER ARAFAT. KFUR FRONT LEADERS REFRAINED FROM COMMENT, EXCEPT FOR NLP SECRETARY-GENERAL DORY CHAMOUN WHO DEFENDED TAKING OF CAMP.

2. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS REPORTS, SEVERAL THOUSAND PALESTINIANS, FORMER INHABITANTS OF TAL AL-ZAATAR, MARCHED THROUGH DAMOUR AUGUST 12 TO COMMEMORATE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF CAMP'S FALL. ON SAME DAY, Wafa EDITORIAL MADE CLEAR THAT ANNIVERSARY HAD BECOME ONE OF MAIN DATES IN HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN DIASPORA. Wafa COMPARED CAMP'S FALL TO BLACK SEPTEMBER, DEIR YASSIN, AND "ALL OTHER FRIGHTFUL MASSACRES TO WHICH PALESTINIAN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED."

3. YASSER ARAFAT GAVE SPEECH ON AUGUST 11 AT OPENING
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OF "THIRD TRAINING SESSION AT PALESTINIAN MILITARY ACADEMY."
AS REPORTED BY Wafa, HE SAID:

-- HEROS AND MARTYRS OF TAL AL-ZAATAR "WITH THEIR BLOOD TOLD WHOLE WORLD THAT IN THIS ARAB NATION THERE ARE MEN WHO DO NOT KNEEL DOWN OR SURRENDER AND WHO WILL NEVER LAY DOWN THEIR RIFLES;"

-- "THIS REVOLUTION WILL FOLLOW ITS COURSE TO LIBERATE PALESTININE AND TO REACH JERUSALEM, WHETHER BEGIN OR VANCE WISH IT OR NOT. OUR ANSWER IS DECISION OF MILITARY COUNCIL OF PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION IN ALL ITS FACTIONS, AND YOUR PROMOTION SHOULD REPRESENT ALL FACTIONS OF RESISTANCE MOVEMENT..."

4. COMMENT: ARAFAT THUS REPEATED MILITANT LINE USED DURING HIS AUGUST 8 ADDRESS IN SOUTH LEBANON (SEE BEIRUT 3930), BUT THIS TIME HE MADE NO MENTION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242. MOREOVER, HIS REFERENCES TO "FACTIONS" IN PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT SUGGEST SPECIAL CARE TO ASSURE REJECTIONISTS THAT THEIR INTERESTS WOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN. END COMMENT.

5. LEBANESE LEADERS GENERALLY REFRAINED FROM COMMENT. NLP SECRETARY-GENERAL DORY CHAMOUN, HOWEVER, HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST 12 AND DEFENDED TAKING OF TAL AL-ZAATAR.

ACCORDING TO CHAMOUN:

-- CAMP HAD BECOME "FORTRESS" SHELTERING 3,000 FIGHTERS FROM MANY ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING POLISARIO FRONT, ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT, JAPANESE RED ARMY, AND TUPAMAROS;
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-- SIZE OF CAMP HAD INCREASED FROM 1600 SQUARE METERS IN 1967 TO MORE THAN ONE MILLION SQUARE METERS IN 1974, THUS MENACING EXISTENCE OF NEARBY FACTORIES AND FORCING 200,000 LEBANESE TO FLEE AREA;

-- CAPTURED DOCUMENTS SHOW THAT TAL AL-ZAATAR WAS USED TO PLAN TERRORIST ATTACKS AT MUNISH, ROME, ZURICH AND LOD AIRPORT.

6. COMMENT: ALL LEADERS OF KFUR FRONT DOUBTLESS BELIEVE TAKING OF TAL AL-ZAATAR WAS BOTH NECESSARY AND JUSTIFIED. FAILURE OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OTHER THAN NLP TO MAKE STATEMENT, HOWEVER, SUGGESTS THEY DO NOT WISH TO EXACERBATE RELATIONS WITH PALESTINIANS OVER THIS ISSUE. END COMMENT.
PARKER

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